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# THE EDITION AT A GLANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board Members</th>
<th>Inside Front Cover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Editorial</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network Review</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**A Survey of Community Psychology Teaching in Tertiary Institutions in Australia** by J. Farhall & T. Love

**The Role and Responsibility of the Psychologist in the South African Social Context: Summary of Survey of Psychologists' Views** by S. Lazarus

**International Interest Group** 20

**Occupational Interests Research Project** 29

**New Zealand Psychological Society Inc. Annual Conference** 31

**New Members** Inside Back Cover
EDITORIAL

Welcome to the second edition of NETWORK for 1987. Again, I am impressed by the quality of our Newsletter. The article by John Farhall and Tony Love is excellent and will no doubt be regarded highly in the field. Congratulations to our colleagues for their achievement.

1988 INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF PSYCHOLOGY

Last edition I called for names we might put forward for keynote speakers in Community Psychology for the 24th International Congress to be held in Sydney in 1988. To date, the following people have been suggested: Julian Rappaport, Seymour Sarason, Dave Thomas, Shulamit Reinharz, and Irma Serrano-Garcia. Any other people who you would like to see added to this list? If so, contact Heather Bancroft - our Congress Liaison Person.

APS (VICTORIAN) CONFERENCE

Thanks to all Board Members who attended the VICTORIAN CONFERENCE. The Conference theme was the social responsibility of Psychologists. Brilliant papers by Jocelyn Scutt, Connie Peck and many others gave several insightful perspectives on the conference theme. Good job to all!

The one disappointment was that time did not permit the organisation of the working-party to look at training in Social Ecology and/or Community Psychology ... ah well, perhaps at the August 1987 APS Conference in Canberra.

APS CONFERENCE – CANBERRA, August 1987

I have received no comment about activities proposed in the last edition of NETWORK regarding a tour of places where Community Psychologists work in the nation's capital.

What has developed is a group of colleagues have been
committed to running a workshop in Community Psychology on the Friday following the Conference. Notably, Brian Bishop from John Curtin University; Connie Peck from La Trobe University are a couple of notable agreeing to present at this workshop.

SUBMISSION TO THE TASK FORCE ON TRAINING OF PROFESSIONAL AND NON PROFESSIONAL WORKERS IN THE ALCOHOL AND DRUG FIELD

The Board has completed its response to this task force on behalf of the Australian Psychological Society. Copies are available from the Editor.

CALL FOR PAPERS FOR NETWORK

Finally, I urge any person who is interested in publishing an article in NETWORK to submit a draft to me for review.
"Is there an assumption, almost always unverbalized, that we accept and without which the structure and substance of what we do today or did yesterday makes no sense?"

In his latest book, Schooling in America, Seymour Sarason explains how he uses the above question to help his students understand the role which one's world view plays in how we see events and processes. The understanding is particularly critical to an appreciation of his latest analysis of educational problems and prospects. In this book, Sarason explores a very timely question, i.e. why is it that in spite of decades of effort and millions of dollars we have yet to identify effective solutions for improving our schools? Sarason asks the questions at just the right time for it appears the Nation will once again embark on a concentrated effort to respond to the problems outlined in the report of The National Commission on Excellence in Education, A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform. Those charged with reducing the "risk" associated with the nation's educational inadequacies are unlikely to give serious consideration to the theme of Sarason's provocative inquiry. In a carefully constructed argument, Sarason explains how the particular world view characterising past attempts to improve education assumed without question, that education had to occur in schools within curricula. If, as he posits, that assumption is not essential to education, i.e. to the acquisition of knowledge, then a universe of alternative educational strategies becomes possible.

Upon first reading, Schooling in America seems an
intellectually interesting but impractical treatise of an important national problem. Education without Schools? How unlikely indeed how dangerous an idea for a society which prides itself on its level of literacy and educational access? Yet, a closer reading of Sarason’s argument causes one to appreciate the differences between education and schooling, between literacy as measured by tests scores and literacy as measured by adaptative skills, between going to school and wanting to learn.

At an earlier time, Sarason questioned what the fate of the Community Mental Health Clinic movement would have been had no money been provided for buildings. Where would services have been provided? What would they be like? How long would they last? Who would use them? Who would provide them? As policymakers begin to consider their responses to A Nation at Risk they may find that Sarason’s questions about the necessity of schools for education deserves some consideration. His thoughts may be particularly salient as we enter an era in which even deeper cuts in domestic spending are likely to occur in response to record budget deficits. Sarason’s position does not imply the destruction of all schools or the firing of all teachers – only that we appreciate the limits of what these approaches to education can achieve. Throughout his book, Sarason provides examples of other approaches of learning that occurs outside of school and after school hours. Those who question that schools per se can have a negative impact on learning are reminded of the fact that most children enter school truly eager to learn yet within a few years respond to school with boredom and disinterest. Sarason’s book forces the thoughtful reader to consider that transition and, leaving aside all assumptions about education, attempt to identify ways to maintain the early love of learning.

Schooling in America is not to be read quickly and set aside. It doesn’t allow one to approach it that way. Rather the book brings one back to it again and again for each reread gives one a slightly better understanding
of the unexplored world of alternatives exposed by Sarason’s assumption busting work. This book is recommended for all interested and/or involved in solving the Nation’s educational problems.

The LIVELY AUDIENCE: A Study of Children Around the TV Set
1986
Patricia Palmer
Allen & Unwin Aust. Pty. Ltd.,
P.O. Box 764, Nth. Sydney, 2060

The relationship between the child and the television set has always been a matter for debate, and often of heated controversy. The Lively Audience is for all those people – parents, teachers, television producers – who are concerned about the place television holds in children’s lives, and who have strong opinions about how television should be used. Its message is challenging and provocative.

Based on recent research which includes careful observation and analysis of children viewing television at home, it scrutinises the claim that television is "bad" for children, and subjects the notion that children’s relationship with television is one of passive dependency to critical examination. It reveals how children interact with television, how they incorporate it into their lives, how they hold very different views about what they see. Above all, it demonstrates how television means very different things to different children.

By exploring television as children themselves see it and use it, The Lively Audience demonstrates the real potential of TV programmes for children has scarcely begun to be appreciated. The research presented here, and the conclusions drawn from it, should encourage those working with children, with television, and in education, to look beyond existing practices to create
new kinds of television for an audience of children we have only lately begun to understand and respect.

Patricia Palmer is a social psychologist who teaches audience research at the Australian Film and Television School.

Contents

1. A New Look at Children and Television: Observational studies; New directions for research; Television from a Symplc Interactionist Perspective 2. Methods of Research: Interviews; Observations; Survey; An Integrated account 3. TV: The Child's View: Children's definitions of television; Why do children watch TV?; Qualities of favourite TV programs; The popularity of cartoons 4. Family Room, TV Room: Television in the family space; The TV area observed; Manipulating the set; Activity around the set 5. Talk Back Television: Children's interaction with TV programs; Expressive forms of interaction; Non-expressive forms of interaction; Patterns of interaction; The child–TV relationship is 'interactive'
6. The Friendship Network: Television and friends; The progression of television talk; Television–inspired games; Extended role–play at one school; The significance of television–inspired talk and play 7. What is 'children's television'? Not what adults think it is; The shows children like best; Not 'adults only'; Special TV for children; Not the news; How could we provide for children on TV? 8. The Lively Audience: A different understanding of the child audience; The 'active' child viewer; The lively audience; Pessimism or promise?
A SURVEY OF COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY TEACHING IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN AUSTRALIA

John Farhall, M.A. and Tony Love, Ph.D.

INTRODUCTION

This article reports on a survey sponsored by the Board of Community Psychologists to help the Board form a picture of the nature and extent of teaching of Community Psychology at a tertiary level in Australia.

Since the formation of the Board of Community Psychologists, it has become clear to Committee members that few of our colleagues seem to have much understanding of the scope and content of the field of Community Psychology. Few Committee members and colleagues seem to have formally studied Community Psychology in their tertiary training. In fact, many members and affiliates of the Board seem to have sought membership or contact with the Board in an attempt to find out more about a field in which they feel under-educated, but tantalized. These observations led the Board to nominate further education as one of its major priorities for 1987 and to undertake the survey reported on here.

This survey was aimed at gaining information about the prevalence of Community Psychology teaching in tertiary courses accredited by the APS. It was limited to accredited courses being the ones where professional psychologists receive their basic training.

METHOD

Although one may have expected a more creative method of gaining the information from a group of Community Psychologists, a mailout survey was chosen for logistic and economic reasons. It is worth noting, however, that some of the methodology was influenced by Community Psychology evaluation methods.
Firstly, the major users of the information (the Board’s National Committee) were involved in the planning of the study by discussion of aims and selection of method, by suggesting content and reviewing drafts, and by assisting with telephone follow-up. Secondly, a small sample (5) of the population to be surveyed was involved in the study by contributing towards the definition of Community Psychology used in the questionnaires, and by commenting on a draft of the Questionnaires. Thirdly, the survey respondents each received personal attention in the form of a telephone call (or failing that, a message) from a Board Committee member a few days after receiving the questionnaires. The purpose being to check whether the survey had arrived, answer any queries and personally encourage them to respond. In addition, after the return date, non-respondents received a telephone call to remind them to return the questionnaire and to handle any queries.

The Questionnaires

Sets of questionnaires were sent to the 30 Psychology Departments at tertiary institutions in Australia teaching at least one psychology course accredited by the APS. Each Head of Department received a package containing an explanatory letter and colour-coded questionnaires as follows:

Form A "Head of Department Questionnaire"

This was to be filled out by the Head of Department, whether or not any Community Psychology subjects were currently being taught. The eight questions covered background information about the Department’s staff and students, whether, and at what level, Community Psychology was taught, and the respondent’s attitude towards Community Psychology teaching.
Form B "Specific Information Re Community Psychology Subjects/Units Being Taught in 1986"

Heads of Departments were asked to distribute a copy of the Form to "each staff member who teaches any subject/unit in Community Psychology". It consisted of 10 questions eliciting a description of the course, numbers of students, staff involved, and estimation of student interest etc.

Form C "Questionnaire for any Staff Who Have Some Expertise in Aspects of Community Psychology"

The Head of Department was asked to distribute a copy of Form C to "...... staff who regard themselves as having teaching or research expertise in Community Psychology irrespective of whether they are currently teaching/researching in this field". Form C sought information on qualifications, training, specific areas of interest in Community Psychology and the respondent's interest in Board activities. The results from this Form will not be presented here.

RESULTS FROM HEAD OF DEPARTMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Response Rate

From the 30 sets of questionnaires sent, 24 Form A Questionnaires were returned representing an 80% response rate. Twenty-two Forms (73%) had usable responses. Although at first glance 80% may sound excellent for a mail-out survey, the response rate is disappointing, given all Heads of Departments (except three) were contacted by telephone at least once as described previously, and given the survey originated from the APS which accredits the Courses being surveyed.

Non-respondents (Canberra and Mitchell CAE's, Adelaide, Deakin, N.S.W. and Sydney Universities) included small and large institutions, and at least two of them are known to have taught Community Psychology in the past, if not currently.
How Many Institutions Teach Community Psychology?

Sixteen (73%) of the 22 respondents indicated Community Psychology had been taught in their institution in 1985. Fourteen (64%) indicated that it was being taught in 1986 whilst 15 (68%) said it was planned for 1987. Six institutions, all from Victoria (Melbourne and Monash Universities, Ballarat and Melbourne CAE's, Phillip IAE and Royal Melbourne IT) reported they taught no Community Psychology subjects in 1985 or 1986, and only one of these planned a subject for 1987.

What Areas of Community Psychology Are Taught?

The Questionnaire asked whether any of a list of Community Psychology subjects were taught in 1985 or planned for 1987 at any level of study. "Community Psychology (general)" was taught in 1985 and/or 1986 by 50% (11) of responding institutions. Of the specific areas of Community Psychology listed in the Questionnaire, "Programme Evaluation/Evaluation Research" was the most often endorsed (n=8, 36%), whereas "Ecological Psychology" was not taught at all. Table 1 lists the areas of Community Psychology in order of frequency of endorsement as having been taught in 1985 and/or 1986.

Staff Resources for Community Psychology

More than three-quarters (17) of the institutions surveyed had at least one staff member with some Community Psychology expertise, and the mean as 1.7 per institution. Across all of the (21) institutions there were a total of 38 staff pointed out by Heads of Departments as having Community Psychology expertise. This represents 9.7% of teaching staff.

How Prevalent are Community Psychology Subjects at Different Teaching Levels?

Students were most likely to be offered Community Psychology as part of a Masters Coursework degree. Sixty-three percent of such courses offered a Community
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Taught in 1985 and/or 1986</th>
<th>Proposed For 1987</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Psychology (general)</td>
<td>11 50</td>
<td>7 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme Evaluation/ Evaluation Research</td>
<td>8 36</td>
<td>3 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Mental Health</td>
<td>4 18</td>
<td>3 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation Theory &amp; Skills (secondary consultation not casework)</td>
<td>4 18</td>
<td>3 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Psychology</td>
<td>4 18</td>
<td>3 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Research/Process Evaluation</td>
<td>3 14</td>
<td>3 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Policy/Social Planning</td>
<td>3 14</td>
<td>3 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Prevention/Preventative Psychology</td>
<td>2 9</td>
<td>1 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Change/Social Action</td>
<td>2 9</td>
<td>2 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Organisation/Community Development</td>
<td>1 5</td>
<td>1 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Support Systems/Networking</td>
<td>1 5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecological Psychology</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2 9</td>
<td>2 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Psychology subject in 1986, compared with only 37% of three year under-graduate courses and 40% of Approved 4th year courses. Community Psychology was least likely to be offered in Honours components of Honours Degrees.

**Attitudes to Current Extent of Community Psychology Teaching in the Departments Surveyed**

Respondents were asked whether there was "too little", "too much" or "an appropriate amount (or appropriate absence)" of Community Psychology teaching within their Departments. Regardless of whether Community Psychology was being taught or not, most respondents (59%) believed the status quo was appropriate, whereas only 23% checked "too little".

Six of the 11 Departments where Community Psychology was not taught gave the opinion that this level of teaching was appropriate.

Only three (27%) Departments not teaching Community Psychology responded that this was too little.

Interestingly, all of the five centres checking "Too Little Community Psychology Teaching" have at least one staff member with community expertise. One of these centres teaches no Community Psychology but claims seven staff with some expertise.

**RESULTS FROM FORM B (QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LECTURERS)**

Form B sought specific information from the lecturer about each Community Psychology subject taught. Because distribution of Form B to lecturers was via Heads of Departments, it is not possible to calculate exact response rates, since we don’t know how many were given out. We do know at least 80% of institutions returned at least one Form B where these were distributed. However, less than 77% of the people who received a copy of Form B returned it.
Format of Community Psychology Subjects

The 23 Community Psychology subjects for which information was received were offered either in third year (10), fourth year (4) or post-graduate courses (9). All 23 subjects had a lecture or seminar basis with 10 (43.5%) including agency visits and eight (31.8%) including a project or some research. In most cases where Community Psychology was taught, it was a substantial subject in terms of classroom hours.

The impressive number including agency visits, suggest that a real-life orientation is prevalent, and the fact that one-third included research implies a scientist-practitioner model was being utilized.

How Many Students Take Community Psychology Subjects?

Just over half the 22 units were optional rather than compulsory. The percentage of eligible students choosing the Community Psychology subject when it was optional ranged from 10% to 90% with a mean of 52.7%. All of the ten third year Community Psychology subjects were optional, all of the fourth year subjects compulsory and seven of the nine Masters level subjects were compulsory.

In 1986, the student numbers ranged from three to 100 with a Mean of 29.4 (Median 17.0).

Level of Student Interest

For each subject reported on, the lecturer was asked to rate the students’ level of interest on the rating scale in Table 2.
TABLE 2: COMPARATIVE INTEREST BY STUDENTS IN COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY SUBJECTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating Scale</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Much greater interest than for other subjects/units</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same level of interest for other subjects/units</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much lower interest than for other subjects/units</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although more than half of the respondents (12) rated student interest at the same level as for other subjects, eight (34.8%) rated interest as higher than other subjects whilst only one respondent rated it lower. This was at an institution where students had to choose between a Community Psychology option, and a counselling option which was preferred being a prerequisite for the fourth year of study (taken by most students). The respondent noted those who did take the Community Psychology unit "almost universally judge it as (the) most interesting, enjoyable, useful (yet taxing) they have taken" (Darling Downs). To what extent the ratings reflect the staff members enthusiasm for their own subjects, or real student interest would be interesting to know.

The greatest student interest was at third year level. All of these units included an applied element (e.g. placements) and it was this "real world" facet the staff saw as being responsible for the level of student interest.

The student acceptance of Community Psychology subjects was not just confined to options, however.
Even when they took a compulsory Community Psychology subject, students' interest was never rated as lower than for other subjects, and in one third of compulsory subjects it was rated as higher.

DISCUSSION

How Well Has Community Psychology Penetrated Accredited Courses?

The general picture emerging from the survey is that many tertiary institutions (73%) currently teach at least a little in the field of Community Psychology, with most of the teaching being of generalist Community Psychology units. The modal course is quite substantial, with around 30 hours of class time and has either a placement or a project as part of the course. Most institutions have at least one staff member with expertise in at least some aspect of Community Psychology, with the total numbers representing about 10% of all teaching staff. Their expertise is in General Community Psychology and community evaluation approaches. Most post-graduate practitioner training courses include Community Psychology.

The above sounds like a reasonable penetration by Community Psychology into APS accredited courses, until one considers the proportion of students actually exposed. Although 37% of institutions offer Community Psychology subjects in under-graduate courses, the returns from Form B suggest these are usually optional subjects taken only by about half of the eligible students. Extrapolating from these figures leads to an estimate of less than 20% of under-graduate students actually taking any Community Psychology subject.

Community Psychology seems to have made a better penetration into Masters Courses, however. Over 60% of these courses claimed to offer Community Psychology subjects, and importantly, most were compulsory. Even so, the subjects offered tended to be small parts of the courses they were in.
Should More Community Psychology be Taught?

Is there any justification for arguing that Community Psychology warrants a bigger place in the education and training of psychologists?

Heads of Departments, in general, judged their staff as being satisfied with the amount of Community Psychology being taught (or not being taught) at their institution. The survey revealed no indication of pressure for changes from within institutions.

There may be pressure for change emerging from the workplace, however. In Victoria, the Health Department is the largest employer of Clinical Masters graduates. Although in the last ten years the psychology establishment has grown in most areas, the greatest growth continues to be in the Community Mental Health field now accounting for more than one-third of the psychologists employed. Clearly, psychologist positions in so-called "community" agencies are a large and growing proportion of the psychologist workforce in Mental Health, at least in Victoria.

Of the 25 Victorian Community Mental Health Centre psychologists (employed in August 1986), 84% have a clinical Masters degree. Their expertise in therapy is excellent; their expertise in community development strategies is dubious, if the survey results are any guide. In the past, their work roles have revolved around therapy, but Community Centres are increasingly being called upon to actually do "community work". In recent years, Government reports such as the Richmond Report, (N.S.W. Health Department, 1983) and the Ministerial Review of Community Health, in Victoria (1985) have recommended rapid growth in community-based health and mental health services, often at the expense of institutionally-based services. Over the past six years, the Mental Retardation field in Victoria, traditionally a major employer of psychologists, has adopted an educational/community philosophy with an emphasis on
generic workers and community rather than individual intervention.

Although specialist clinical psychology skills are still in demand, especially at Mental Health agencies, psychology schools have not responded in any proportionate way to the changes in demand of these employers. There seems to be a danger that a smaller proportion of psychologists will be employed as time goes on if the major emphasis of employing organisations moves towards community interventions, and the growth in "generic" positions continues. Social workers are trained almost universally in community interventions and most professions are cheaper to employ than psychologists. There would be little incentive in that climate to employ psychologists whose skills were only oriented towards work with individuals.

The authors do not believe community approaches to the improvement of well being are best left to other professions. Our view is that psychologists with significant training in Community Psychology have much to offer in the growth of community services. Each profession seems to bring its own perspective and skills to a shared problem. The "scientist-practitioner" model of Community Psychology encourages practitioners to capitalise on Psychology's particular understanding of human behaviour, and its technologies of problem assessment and evaluation of interventions. Appropriately trained psychologists could be valuable and marketable professionals in the emerging community-focused services.

But we seem to have a long way to go as far as training is concerned – in terms of specific subjects taught at any level in the institutions surveyed, only four (18%) taught Community Mental Health and only two (9%) taught prevention. It is clear students who want to specialise in Community Psychology in Australia by coursework have nowhere to go.
How difficult is it for more Community Psychology to be taught?

None of the factors canvassed in the survey clearly stood out above the others as being the obvious impediments to change. One may speculate the paucity of courses in Community Psychology perpetuates a situation where few academics have had exposure to the field and its potential.

It is encouraging to see all of the institutions that rated themselves as teaching "Too Little" Community Psychology actually claimed to have at least one staff member with expertise. This suggests more Community Psychology could be taught now with the current staffing, if institutions made it a priority.

A difficulty in teaching Community Psychology was pointed out by a few respondents was the lack of Australian material to use in teaching. More Australian references and more Australian centres of excellence would help stimulate students and bring Community Psychology concepts and applications closer to home.

One Limitation of the Study

Apart from the limitations imposed by the 80% response rate for Form A and the less than 77% response rate for Form B, a comprehensive picture is difficult to obtain for other reasons. Some respondents claimed many of their subjects had some "community" content or philosophy, but were not Community Psychology subjects per se. Community Psychology, being an orientation as well as a set of methods, may have permeated other fields of psychology more than can be easily measured, and we may have under-estimated its prevalence for this reason.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we have identified that excellent units in Community Psychology are taught in some APS accredited courses in this country. However, not all students who wish to be psychologists have the opportunity of taking
Community Psychology subjects. This is despite some indications of growth in employment in this area. The Board of Community Psychologists will be examining the implications of these results carefully in considering its future policy on education in this field.

REFERENCES

NEW SOUTH WALES, Health Department, Division of Planning and Research. *The Inquiry into Health Services for the Psychiatrically Ill and Developmentally Disabled.* (Compiled by D.T. Richmond), N.S.W. Government Printer, Sydney, 1983.


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Among psychologists in South Africa there is increasing discontent with mainstream psychology, and the need is being expressed for a psychology which contributes meaningfully to a society faced with a number of serious social crises (Dawes, 1985; Jordaan & Jordaan, 1984; Moll, 1983; Strumpfer, 1981). In response to this growing need, in addition to a personal commitment to social change in South Africa on the part of the author, the focus of the present study was the question of the role and responsibility of the psychologist in the South African social context, and her/his response to the social issues implicated as partial causes or aggravators of South Africans' problems in living.

The study described here is part of a wider investigation. For this purpose it was considered both appropriate and essential that psychologists in South Africa be consulted about what they saw as their own role and responsibility in this regard. A questionnaire was therefore mailed to all registered (licensed) psychologists in South Africa (N=1350). The final sample used for analysis constituted 12.2% of the total population of psychologists in South Africa. In addition, semi-structured taped interviews were conducted by the researcher with 47 psychologists around the country. This sample was found to be representative of the population of South African psychologists as described by various recent statistics (Bassa & Schlebusch, 1984; Jordaan & Jordaan, 1984; South African Medical and Dental Council Register of 1984). According to these sources the majority of psychologists in South Africa are white (over 90%), registered as clinical psychologists, employed in university settings, reside in the Transvaal (north-east), are male, and speak almost equally Afrikaans and English (the two "official" languages in South Africa).
The questionnaires were descriptively analysed for content by an independent research assistant. The researcher then conducted a similar analysis of the taped interviews. The questions used in both methods provided predetermined categories for these analyses. The predetermined categories used in both analyses were (a) the responsibility of the psychologist to respond to social issues in South Africa; (b) the psychologist's role in responding to social issues; (c) the issues in South Africa that should be addressed; and (d) the relevance of community psychology to the South African context. Within each of the categories emergent response categories were developed, reflecting the similarities and trends in the responses given to the various questions. Frequencies were noted where appropriate. Two further areas were explored during the interviewing process, providing the additional categories of (e) the relationship between psychology and politics; and (f) the implications for the training of psychologists in South Africa.

Summary of Findings

In both sections of the study the vast majority of the psychologists indicated that they believed the psychologist in South Africa has some responsibility to respond to social issues which are believed to be implicated in causing or aggravating problems in living. Various reasons were given for this. The major reasons identified were that (a) the individual can be viewed only within the framework of her/his social context and is affected by this environment within which she/he lives; (b) the psychologist has some special skills and understanding to offer in this regard; (c) prevention is important and more economical than efforts to repair damage already done; and (d) psychology needs to be more relevant to society. However, some of the respondents argued that their responsibility to respond to these issues was as a citizen, rather than as a psychologist.
In the interviews the issue of the involvement of the psychologist in politics was raised. In this regard a number indicated a clear support for political activism, but there were also a substantial minority who were not in favour of it. Two main reasons were given for the support for involvement in the political realm. Some felt that the psychologist is clearly responsible if there are indications of political factors adversely affecting the individual. On another note, some pointed out that the psychologist in fact has no choice as to whether or not to be involved, as her/his actions as a psychologist are always informed by her/his values and political stance, either in support of or against the status quo. Participants who were against the psychologist's involvement in politics felt that the psychologist could be politically aligned because a psychologist should adopt a value-neutral position, and that the responsibility for a political stance should therefore be taken up as a citizen rather than as a psychologist.

With respect to the role of the psychologist in attempting to respond to social issues, both sections of the study showed that a number believed the psychologist should work within an interdisciplinary context, providing cooperative action both with other disciplines and with other psychology specialisations. The interviews highlighted the problem of professional territoriality in this regard. However, there was a strong feeling that within the context of interdisciplinary cooperation, the psychologist has some special skills and perspectives that constitute a valuable contribution to society. In this regard, the major contributions identified were (a) understanding individuals and groups from a psychological perspective; (b) skills with which to help individuals and groups; (c) research skills and expertise; (d) development of theories related to the context and process of social change; and (e) analyses enabling the deconstruction of ideological slants.
Specific actions suggested by participants included a number of activities believed to be helpful in responding to wider social issues. In both sections of the study the major activity proposed was that of conducting socially useful research, and disseminating findings as a means of arousing the public conscience. Other major activities proposed included the provision of accessible services to the community; consultancy to key persons and policy makers in the community; public psychoeducation; training nonprofessionals; planning and running community programmes; conflict resolution and intergroup mediation; identification and utilisation of community support networks; and working within settings such as schools and industry.

When respondents were asked to identify which social issues in South Africa should be addressed by the psychology profession, both sections of the study revealed that political issues such as oppression, inter-group conflict and the effects of apartheid policy were seen as important. Economic issues, including housing, unemployment, poverty and distribution of resources were also emphasized. Cross-cultural understanding emerged as a major concern for many participants. Family life, including marital and parenting problems and working with children, was also considered important, as were issues related to socio-economic factors (e.g. migrant labour). Other issues relatively frequently identified were education, alcohol and drug abuse, work/industrial issues, stress, and the training of psychologists.

Participants from both sections of the study indicated a strong support for the relevance of the community psychology approach to the South African context. However, it became clear that this approach, which includes a number of different ideologies and intervention methods, was supported for different reasons and in different ways by the participants of this study.
A number of participants indicated that psychologists needed to work at all levels, i.e. individual, groups, communities and structures, and that the actual level of intervention chosen would depend on the particular problem being addressed. However, many felt that although ideally one should aim to change the structures and therefore engage in social rather than individual change, the most realistic point to start was the individual level. The community mental health model was therefore strongly supported.

Some problems and limitations of the use of this approach in South Africa perceived by the participants are worthy of note. The major issue identified was that of resistance, both from political/status quo powers and from the community the psychologist wishes to serve. In addition, the question of where this kind of work would find funding was raised.

In the interviews, implications for the training of psychologists in South Africa were explored. There was almost unanimous support for training psychologists to respond effectively to social issues in this country. Different views were expressed with regard to when this training should take place. The participants were almost equally divided as to whether or not a specialised community psychology should be available in South Africa. There was strong support for this approach to be incorporated into present specialisations, since ALL psychologists take their responsibility in this regard seriously.

Conclusion

While many common threads and concerns bind the participants in the present study, there also appear to be some important differences which highlight fundamental issues arising from the research question. For example, one major controversy amongst psychologists in South Africa is that between value-neutrality on the one hand, and a clear value choice and even political alignment on the other.
In addition, the researcher became aware of further differences between participants in terms of attitudes and assumptions underlying their role in society, and in particular in terms of service to the community. These are obviously complex and cannot be simplistically represented in this paper. It would suffice to describe one major difference as being the contrast between an attitude of 'service' on the one hand, and 'solidarity' on the other (Williams, 1961). Williams' analysis of the concept of 'service', when used by a body which is relatively strongly bound to the ruling classes, involves a top-downwards attitude toward clients with the aim of the helper being to raise the other upwards. The 'solidarity' approach, in contrast, begins with the reversal of the power or authority relationship and involves active mutual responsibility. It is the author's belief that these basic assumptions of the psychologist's role in the community need to be confronted and that, in fact, the respective consequences of the two approaches should be seriously considered. The attitudes and assumptions with which the psychologist enters the community arena will determine her/his credibility and access to many groups in South Africa. The author feels that the 'solidarity' framework is crucial if the aims of the community approach are to be adequately fulfilled, and that the 'service' assumption could breed further rejection of the psychology profession by the very groups the psychologist wishes to serve.

A further issue highlighted by the current research pertains to the participants' differing analyses of the South African context. On the one hand many saw the major issue in South Africa as being one of different cultures, with emphasis on the need for cross-cultural understanding and work. While accepting that cultural factors need to be recognized, other participants criticised an emphasis on cross-cultural work when it is allowed to obscure the power differential between the members of the different cultures. They argue that the central problem is perceived to be one of culture rather than domination, a notion central to apartheid ideology in South Africa and therefore unacceptable to many psychologists in this country (Dawes, 1985).
Although there is almost unanimous support for the relevance of community psychology in South Africa amongst the participants of the present study, there are some fundamental differences, both in terms of analysis and emphasis for intervention. These differences are an expression of different worldviews; they not only express themselves in the profession of psychology, but also underlie a great deal of the conflict in South Africa.

Finally, with regard to the training of psychologists, the major question that arose was whether to provide a specialist training programme in community psychology.

Alternatively, theoretical and practical training in areas related to community psychology could be incorporated into present training in South Africa; i.e. clinical, counselling, industrial/organisation, educational, and research/academic psychology. Those supporting the latter felt that if this was done all psychologists would be exposed to the issues inherent in this approach, and would be confronted with their own role in the South African context. It was hoped they would then develop further skills which would equip them to provide a psychological service more relevant to the needs of South Africa.

References


BOARD OF COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGISTS

Victorian Section

Call for Nominations to the State Sections

In accordance with the rules of the Board of Community Psychology, members are advised that Section A.G.M.'s will need to be scheduled.

Therefore, the Victorian Section advises their members the Annual General Meeting will be held at 7.30 pm on Thursday, June 11, at the Social Biology Resources Centre.

Members are wholeheartedly invited to nominate themselves or others for membership of the Section Committee. A Nomination Form accompanies this newsletter.
INTERNATIONAL INTEREST GROUP IN COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY

Division 27 of the American Psychological Association has established an interest group focusing on community psychology issues of international interest. Coordinators include Wolfgang Stark of West Germany, and Janis Kupersmidt, Virginia, U.S.A. (Addresses available from Dave Thomas, Professor of Psychology, Waikato University, Private Mail Bag, Hamilton, New Zealand.)

Recently the graduate programme in community psychology at the University of Waikato, introduced a new topic into the programme, the localisation of community psychology/applied social science research in New Zealand. Four key papers used as background reading for this topic are listed below.

The topic was introduced into the programme because it was clear most of the English-language community psychology literature originates from the United States and carries with it the "cultural baggage" of U.S. interpersonal styles, political frameworks and ideological viewpoints. An important issue is taking community psychology concepts and adapting them into a form that is culturally relevant. The paper by Art Veno, highlights differences between the U.S. and Australia in appropriate roles and styles of intervention for community psychologists.

Further issues raised are the fostering of styles of community development which are indigenous to a country or culture, and the dissemination of community psychology concepts and roles originating outside the U.S. Dave Thomas would welcome any comments on these issues.

References


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OCCUPATIONAL INTERESTS RESEARCH PROJECT

Dr. Frank Naylor, Department of Education, University of Melbourne has recently been awarded a Research and Development Grant to investigate the occupational interests characteristic of particular occupational groups. Venita Hudson and Bernadette Healy are co–workers in this project. Its aim is to validate further the "Holland categories" which are part of the Job Content Factors describing occupations in the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations. These categories are potentially very useful to guidance and careers personnel in accessing occupational information which is of direct relevance to the person concerned. A preliminary study (Naylor, Care & Mount, 1986) yielded very encouraging results; and they are confident that gathering data from more occupational samples will yield an increasingly secure factual base for accessing information.
One difficulty in doing research with real people in the real world is finding them in sufficient numbers to make the data they yield generalisable. If you are able to help by agreeing to be included in the project or by putting the researchers in touch with individual people or occupational groups, they would be most grateful. There is no extended commitment required. The data are gathered in confidence and are not able to be traced. Only the research personnel will have access to the University computer files. They will contain no data from which individuals might be identified. Participants will be asked to supply certain factual biographical information, and to take an occupational interest inventory.

If you would like to help the researchers and require more information please telephone Dr. Naylor or Bernadette Healy on 344 699 during business hours. Your cooperation will be most welcome and appreciated.

Alternatively, Vocational Interest Questionnaires will be available on the Education Night, June 11, Social Biology Resource Centre.

Reference

PSYCHOLOGY AND THE COMMUNITY

The New Zealand Psychological Society
Inc. Annual Conference
26–30 August, 1987, Wellington

The theme of this year’s Conference, Psychology and the Community, has been chosen because of the increasing contribution made to the community by psychologists in the fields of research and clinical practice.

VENUE

Quality Inn, 355 Willis Street (P.O. Box 27–241), Wellington. Tel: (04) 859–819.
(Disabled people are adequately catered for.)

ACCOMMODATION

Quality Inn

Room rate $104.50 per night (twin/double/single). Please book direct with the hotel and before 1 July.

Victoria House (university hostel)

282 The Terrace, Wellington. Tel: (04) 843–357.
Please book direct with the hostel and before 1 July.

CHILDCARE

University Creche

67 & 69 Fairlie Terrace, Kelburne.
Tel: (04) 758–145 (during 9 am – 5 pm)
Some places are available for 0–6 year olds. Please contact the Creche Supervisor for further information.
ENROLMENT AND FEE

A final brochure with an enrolment form will be circulated in June 1987, when the fee of $120.00 (students $60.00) will be requested.

CORRESPONDENCE AND INQUIRIES TO

In writing:

NZPsS Conference
Centre for Continuing Education
Victoria University
Private Bag,
Wellington.

By phone:

(04) 758-677, or 721-000 ext 5356.
CONTRIBUTORS WANTED

Robin Winkler Special Edition

CALL FOR PAPERS

Network calls for papers from anyone who would like to write an article of approximately 1500-3000 words for publication in Network. The content of the article should be a description of how Robin Winkler’s work has effected their practice or conceptualisation about the field of Community Psychology. The special edition is the December 1987 edition. To date two people have agreed to write such articles.

Deadlines for the submission of articles is October 30th, 1987. Please write to the Editor if you think you might be able to help out with an article.
THE NATIONAL EVALUATION CONFERENCE

will be held in Canberra from 29–31 July, 1987 at the Parkroyal Hotel.

Update your evaluation skills and techniques with speakers from the U.S., Canada, New Zealand and Australia. Opening speaker Dr. Peter Wilenski, Chairman of the Public Service Board, and representatives from Government Departments and Agencies in all States will present the state-of-the-art in Australia.

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